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PLAN OF EVANSTON



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EVANSVILLE, IN.

1874, POPULATION 5000

PLAN OF EVANSTON



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THE EVANSTON SMALL PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS
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EVANSTON SMALL PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS ASSOCIATION

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The Small Parks and Playgrounds Association has been in existence since 1909, when it was organized to manage Mason Park, the gift of William S. Mason to the people of Evanston. In 1914 it relinquished this control to the City Council, in order, as was admirably stated by the then president, Mr. James P. Petrie, that the City of Evanston might be developed as a single unit in compliance with a comprehensive city plan.

The Association's activities during the past two years have comprised the persuasion of the City Council to adopt a three-mill tax for park purposes—ratified at the last election—and in securing from the State Legislature the passage of a law permitting Park Boards to disband. The passage of this law in 1915 makes possible the consolidation of the control of all Evanston's parks. Another activity of the Association was the adoption of a fifty thousand dollar bond issue for building breakwaters to protect the shore line and for sand beaches.

As a logical development of these activities, the president of the Association was authorized in 1916 to appoint a City Plan Committee and to solicit funds for carrying on the work of having plans and a report prepared.

A fund of several hundred dollars was subscribed by the public spirited citizens whose names are printed herewith. The owners of the Hoyburn Building generously gave us the use of quarters, which were furnished without expense by members of this committee. The money has been used for hiring draftsmen and paying for the necessary supplies. The committee has met weekly during a number of months, and individual members of the committee have done much work outside. It has enjoyed the hearty co-operation of Mayor H. P. Pearsons and the Park Committee of the City Council, Messrs. Sherman Kingsley, Wirt E. Humphrey and Edwin Sherman, of Mr. George C. Cone, the park superintendent, and Mr. William A. Dyche of Northwestern University has generously helped with his advice and encouragement.

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VIEW OF EVANSTON BEACH IN 1891

I

FOR a full half century Evanston has had a character. People have thought of it as a place distinct, somehow, from the other suburbs of Chicago—a place where certain material and moral advantages were enjoyed.

A legend of this sort does not grow without a root in the facts. The site of Evanston was strategically chosen at the convergence of the Ridge with the Lake Shore. It was the nearest high ground to Chicago that was on the lake. That is one root. The establishment of Northwestern University, and the clause in its charter which prohibited the sale of liquor within a four mile radius, was the other.

The people who settled here during the sixties and seventies were the sort of people to whom these advantages appealed. They wanted lots of light and clean air, plenty of room for their children to play about in, good schools, security for their youths from the temptations afforded by saloons; a local government free from the contaminations of big, fast-growing, careless, unkempt Chicago. At a distance of twelve miles—forty-five minutes or so by infrequent trains, and they the only means of communication—the security seemed ample.

Those of us who remember the village when it boasted five thousand inhabitants—and the memory needn't be so very long to do it—the village with its gravel roads, capacious yards, its unbuilt squares every here and there, where the aboriginal oaks had not yet died of the drainage and one could always find wild flowers in the spring—we who can remember that will recall the innocent pride we took in the growing urbanity of the place, the handsome increase we showed in the census returns, the new school buildings, the Chicago, Evanston and Lake Superior Railroad, the orange colored electric cars which took us all the way in to the Diversey Street barns, where we could connect with the North Clark Street cable. We got ourselves a city charter, and annexed the vil-

lages of North and South Evanston. We surveyed these changes without any misgiving.

We were pretty well satisfied with ourselves, if the truth be told. It didn't occur to us to question the permanence of our original advantages. We saw the big yards subdivided, the vacant squares built upon, sporadic solid rows of houses, and then flat buildings appearing here and there, without asking where our children's children were to find playground space. We drained our sewage into the lake and drank its water, without reflecting that the process couldn't go on indefinitely. We went on confiding in our isolation from Chicago, without realizing that the distance was getting shorter year by year. To put the truth—unpalatable, perhaps—in a nutshell, the civic spirit of Evanston did not keep pace with its growth.

It is a matter of historical experience, to be sure, that these two never march along in step. Like nations, cities have their great periods, when, after a long somnolence, community spirit springs wide awake—develops leaders and follows them, and accomplishes immense results. The results once attained, it goes to sleep again with them clutched, safely it thinks, in its fist.

Evanston has had its sleep, but there are many indications now that it is waking up. Certainly it is high time it did. The enveloping growth of one of the greatest metropolitan districts in the world is literally at our doorsteps. Let anyone who needs conviction upon this point devote the leisure hours of a Sunday or two to exploring, by street car, bicycle or automobile, the district bounded by Diversey, Crawford, and Howard Streets. Let him look for the old time villages of Lake View, Ravenswood, and Rogers Park.

The legend of King Canute, who ordered the tide to stop advancing up the beach, remains the classic illustration of the fatuous futility of repressive legislation when it is opposed to a natural growth. Voting against annexation; trying to dam up, by inadequate through-routes, the rush of motor traffic;

putting up a level resistance everywhere against the extension of business streets and centers, will avail us nothing. But a thoroughly awakened civic spirit, alert to meet tomorrow's needs, instead of merely today's, willing to make actual sacrifices of time, thought, and money, will avail us everything.

On the purely physical side there are three great problems to be met.

1. Provision for the future of park and playground space. The park was once an aristocratic way of displaying wealth. The prince or nobleman showed his grandeur by the extent of his parks, land which he could afford to devote to a non-productive use. The public were herded along the pathways and permitted to admire. A trace of this old feeling still lingers in some people's minds and they think of parks as a luxury. Parks are, of course, no more a luxury than a man's lungs are a luxury. They are, in sober, literal truth, the lungs of a city. And any city which allows its lung capacity to become inadequate will stifle.

2. Street circulation. Just as parks and playgrounds are lungs, so streets are veins and arteries. No neighborhood, or district, whose circulatory needs are not provided for by its streets, can have a healthy growth. It should be observed that all streets do not serve the same purpose. There must be streets whose main function is to carry through traffic. If the through traffic exists, and no great arteries are provided for it, it will seize upon for its needs whatever it can find—narrow streets not designed to accomodate more than the traffic of their residents. It will endanger life and limb, and be a cause of endless exasperation. Absolutely the only remedy for this state of things is the provision of great trunk arteries to handle this through traffic.

3. The proper location and development of business centers: These, to carry our analogy one step further, are the alimentary organs of a city. No residence district can, or

will, exist without these. People won't go more than about so far to get their daily supplies, and what happens when this need is not recognized is simply the outcropping, here and there, to the speechless indignation of immediate neighbors, of little rows of buildings with store fronts.

No householder in any residence district has any security against having this happen to him, unless his district is adequately served by a business center. Therefore, it is of paramount importance in any city plan that natural centers of business activity should be organized—arranged in such a way as to give not only the highest efficiency through an area of high rents, but, where possible, a high attractiveness.

It is these three vital problems that are dealt with in the plan which is here offered. You will find the maps, drawings, and descriptions which follow worthy of your most earnest consideration.



STREET AND HIGHWAYS

II

HIGHWAYS are divided for the purpose of this report into three groups:

- Group "A": Those streets and highways used for pleasure traffic with commercial usage restricted to the domestic needs of the people living along them.
- Group "B": Trunk arteries for local and through commercial traffic.
- Group "C": Streets and highways used for a combination of Groups "A" and "B."

GROUP "A"

Sheridan Road through Evanston is a disgrace in its present haphazard condition. The city has hesitated to straighten it, and put in permanent pavement, because under present conditions if improved it would at once become the main through artery from Chicago to Milwaukee and points intervening. Unless we provide means to divert this travel away from Sheridan Road there is no way that we can stop the menace. Even if we leave the road in its present disgraceful condition it will receive heavy travel notwithstanding. The issue is so pressing that immediate steps to relieve the congestion must be taken. We make several suggestions further on in this report for alleviating the condition of Sheridan Road.

Leaving the issue for the moment, we recommend that Sheridan Road through Evanston be re-routed as follows: Enter Evanston from the south as at present around the east end of Calvary Cemetery, but instead of turning west at Rinn Street (immediately north of Calvary Cemetery) continue north for one block on Sheridan Square to Keeney Street. Then let the vacant lot on the northeast corner of Sheridan



PROPOSED PARK AND STREET DEVELOPMENT

Road and Keeney Street be acquired, together with its riparian rights, and divert the road from Sheridan Square diagonally by an easy curve across this property in a northwesterly direction back into the present Sheridan Road. If practical, close Keeney Street east of Sheridan Road and use the balance of the acquired property for a park and possibly the beach for bathing. From Keeney Street continue the road north as at present to Main Street, but instead of going west on Main Street go straight north through the Knox property and join into Lake Shore Boulevard beyond. Then continue north along the lake shore to Greenwood Boulevard. At Greenwood Boulevard go northwest by an easy curve back into the present Sheridan Road, and continue around the University and into Wilmette over the drainage canal bridge. Use diligence to ease off the curbs at the corners into larger radius curves, doing this by cutting away the parkways outside of the sidewalks, which are city property. This is the obvious route to be adopted because it is the shortest and would cost much less to keep in repair when once paved than the longer present route with its many sharp corners. This suggested route would be less objectionable to private property owners as a whole because it has the lake or the University on the east almost its full length, and cuts the private frontage of the present route in half. We should not let the private interests of a few block an improvement which will benefit the whole city.

Aside from its other merits this route would be the most beautiful stretch of road in this part of the world.

Island Drive: We advocate the construction of an island in the lake along the entire frontage of Evanston from the south limits to University Place and possibly in front of the University. This island should be separated from the shore by 600 feet of open water to be used for aquatics. On this island we suggest constructing a driveway so that automobiles could be diverted at the south limit of Evanston and get back into the Sheridan Road, either at University Place or near the

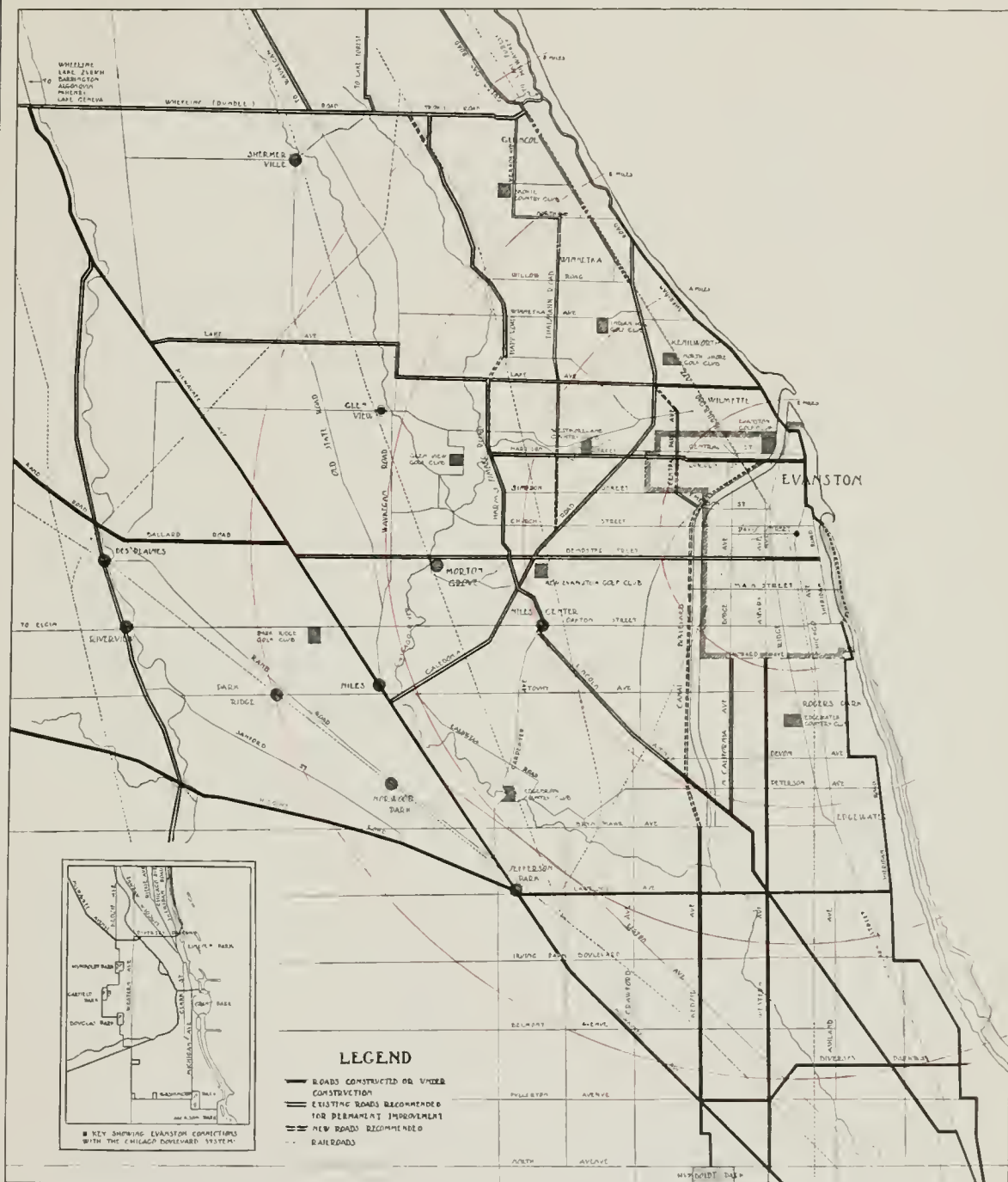
mouth of the drainage canal in Wilmette. This island scheme is similar to the one advocated to connect Grant Park and Jackson Park, and the one to carry Sheridan Road from a point north of the Lincoln Park Yacht Club to Devon Avenue (the extent of the jurisdiction of the Lincoln Park Commissioners for the moment). It is not looking forward many years to visualize this island extended north from Devon Avenue past Evanston and connecting into Sheridan Road near the mouth of the drainage canal at Wilmette, also recommended by the Chicago plan.

Canal Boulevard: We advocate the construction of a boulevard along the west bank of the Drainage Canal, from Brown Avenue to the south city limits to connect with the continuation of Kedzie Avenue, Chicago, from the point where it now stops at Lincoln Avenue. We urge that this boulevard be built on the top of the spoil bank so that it will be an elevated driveway for fast moving vehicles, and that it pass over intersecting streets upon inexpensive viaducts.

Direct access will be had to Wilmette, by an extension of Brown Avenue, into Lincoln Avenue, and then into Central Street. A glance at the map makes it obvious that such a route would enable residents of all towns north of Evanston to reach Chicago in better time than by Sheridan Road, even if Sheridan Road be improved and straightened as suggested above. Access to this route could be had, in Chicago, by way of Diversey, Lawrence, Bryn Mawr, Peterson, Devon and Touhy Avenues, and from Evanston by Oakton and Dempster Streets.

By opening this western route through Evanston, access is made easy, also, to the Thalmann Road north into Wilmette and Winnetka, as well as, via the Harm's Timber Road, and Lake Avenue Wilmette, to the excellent outer highways running north via Wheeling and via Deerfield.

Ridge Avenue: Ridge Avenue gives access to Chicago by way of Clark Street. On the north it leads into Wilmette by Sheridan Road and by Railroad Avenue. There is a city



HIGHWAYS OF EVANSTON AND VICINITY

ordinance in existence making Ridge Avenue a boulevard, but the street has had to take the overflow of commercial traffic from Chicago Avenue and Clark Street, and acts more or less as a trunk artery for heavy traffic. When Dodge Avenue is put in shape, as suggested below, and with Asbury now opened into Western Avenue, Chicago, Ridge will be relieved of the commercial through traffic and should be maintained strictly as a boulevard.

GROUP "B"

Chicago Avenue, which connects with Chicago along Clark Street, is the only outlet from Evanston for strictly commercial vehicles. It will always remain, because of its central location, the most important street for heavy traffic. It is now badly congested with huge trucks, funeral processions, farm market wagons, and street cars. It is just as important to the welfare of Evanston that immediate steps be taken to relieve this traffic congestion on Chicago Avenue as it is to relieve the congestion of pleasure vehicles along Sheridan Road. The easier it is for motor trucks to reach Evanston from Chicago, the quicker they can travel and consequently the cheaper it will be to transport goods to our merchants.

We have made recommendations in the following pages for opening up additional streets for traffic communication with Chicago to relieve this congestion on Chicago Avenue and Clark Street.

We recommend that the present usage of Chicago Avenue for heavy traffic be maintained from Howard Street on the south to Church Street on the north, but that a sign be placed on an island to be located at the corner of Church Street and Chicago Avenue, diverting all heavy traffic west to East Railroad Avenue along Church Street and let it enter Wilmette on West Railroad Avenue. From Church Street north we recommend that Chicago Avenue be maintained as a boulevard to the point where it merges with Sheridan Road at University Place.



CANAL BOULEVARD AT EMERSON STREET

If it were possible at some future date to continue East Railroad Avenue from Emerson Street north across the canal the congestion would be greatly relieved.

Dodge Avenue: It will be seen by glancing at the map of Evanston that Dodge Avenue is the best street on the west side of the city that can be developed for through north and south traffic. It is destined to play a very important part in the development of this section of Evanston. It connects into Chicago by North California Avenue, which in turn runs into Lincoln Avenue. Dodge Avenue terminates on the north at the drainage canal. Unfortunately, there is no provision in the agreement between the City of Evanston and the Sanitary Trustees for a bridge across the drainage canal at Dodge Avenue. Provision should be made for a bridge to connect Dodge Avenue with Brown Avenue across the canal. After crossing this bridge the traffic route would be north along Brown Avenue, extended as shown on our map to connect into Harrison Street, thence by Harrison Street and Central Street to Railroad Avenue; and thence north along Railroad Avenue into Wilmette. The small triangular piece bounded by Harrison Street and Brown Avenue extended and Prairie Avenue should be acquired as a city park. Where Dodge crosses the Chicago & Northwestern tracks at Lake Street it should be carried over in a straight line and not by the awkward "S" turn as at present. Dodge Avenue should receive a most substantial pavement, because it will have the heaviest possible usage, serving as it does the factories and brick yards along its route. Furthermore, this street is destined to receive the heavy traffic of market wagons and motor trucks coming from the farms to the west of Evanston. We predict as soon as Dodge Avenue is paved and opened into Chicago that at least one-third of the congestion on the Chicago Avenue and Clark Street route will be eliminated.

Asbury Avenue: Now that this street has been connected into Western Avenue, Chicago, and the street cars run as far as Howard Street, traffic should be encouraged to utilize

Asbury Avenue as far north as Main Street. In this way Asbury Avenue will tend to relieve the congestion on Chicago Avenue. Main Street, Dempster Street and Davis Street should be used to cross-connect the Dodge Avenue, Asbury Avenue and Chicago Avenue heavy traffic, and such traffic should be excluded from all other cross streets except Howard Street and Harrison Street.

GROUP "C"

Rinn Street (South Boulevard): We advocate that Rinn Street east of the tracks be connected into Oakton Street west of the Chicago & Northwestern viaduct by acquiring the south half of the block, as shown on our map, between Custer and Linden Streets. Carry Rinn Street across this property by an easy curve to connect into Oakton Street at Custer Street, the balance of the property acquired to be used as a park. From Custer Street west continue along Oakton Street as at present laid out and connect into the proposed Canal Boulevard by a ramp.

Dempster Street: The County Commissioners have already advocated Dempster Street as a State Aid Road, from the west limits of Evanston to Milwaukee Avenue. It is only logical that Evanston should meet this advance by putting this street in its best possible condition out to its west limits. Dempster Street because of its central situation and its great length is the most important west exit for Evanston, and nothing should be left undone to make it thoroughly practical.

After Dempster Street reaches Milwaukee Avenue, motors can continue west on the Ballard Road by a slight jog north along Milwaukee Avenue. The Ballard Road leads into the Rand Road, northwest of DesPlaines. The Ballard Road is under construction now and the Rand Road under contract to be paved at once with concrete. The Rand Road runs in a northwesterly direction out through open country as far as the Cook County line, which brings the road within five miles

of Lake Zurich, a distance of 30 miles of continuous paved road from Evanston, if Dempster Street is put in shape.

Harrison Street: We believe that Central Street should be abandoned as the principal north-end exit from Evanston to the west, and in its stead we advocate Lincoln Street, and Harrison Street, which is twice as long as Central Street and starts direct from the lake at the water-works (Lincoln Street) where it is proposed by Mr. Cone to locate the new municipal bathing beach. We advocate improving Lincoln Street, starting at the lake and conveying it over the drainage canal and going one block west of Ewing Avenue. At this point it diverts by an easy curve into Harrison Street. From this point put the road in shape to connect with that already completed part of the road which starts west from where it intersects the Caledonia Road and continues west, passing between the Westmoreland Golf Club and the new cemetery, and continue the pavement of this road to its terminus at the Harm's Timber Road, which is about a quarter of a mile east of the north branch of the Chicago River. From this point motors could go either north along the Harm's Timber Road and connect with the Glen View Road or go north along the Harm's Road to Lake Forest, or else south to Morton Grove, Niles Center, Niles, and points west. Reference to the map will show the advantages of Harrison Street running from the lake to the Harm's Timber Road almost straight, and a great saving of time in reaching Glen View village, eliminating the necessity of going by way of Gross Point with its notoriously bad roads, as must be done by way of Central Street.

Caledonia Road: This road leads from Milwaukee Avenue at Niles northeast to and connecting into Winnetka at Willow Road; we understand that Winnetka will soon open up the balance of Railroad Avenue along the west side of the tracks, which will connect the Caledonia Road with the Green Bay Road, thus making the Caledonia Road a very important highway. Furthermore, at Willow Street you can cross under

the tracks and go straight northeast to Sheridan Road on the existing diagonal street. Evanston is interested in the improvement of the Caledonia Road because it will be another way of diverting traffic from the towns to the north of us back into Lincoln Avenue, and into Chicago without passing through Evanston. Bear in mind that nobody wants to go through a congested city like Evanston if easy ways are provided to go around.

Lincoln Avenue: We cannot emphasize too strongly the tremendous importance of permanently improving Lincoln Avenue. Already Milwaukee Avenue is paved with concrete and is a great north and south highway, but it lies eight miles to the west of Evanston and only aids indirectly in the relief of motor congestion along the North Shore. Lincoln Avenue, however, lying about half way between Evanston and Milwaukee Avenue, will do more than any other road to divert motor congestion from the lake shore, except the proposed Canal Boulevard.

We urge that the pavement of Lincoln Avenue be continued to Niles Center to connect into the Caledonia Road. This will help divert commercial traffic from our streets, which we believe is as important as diverting pleasure traffic. Both tear up our pavements, but heavy trucks are more of a menace than lighter motor cars.

Harm's Timber Road: We recommend that the Harm's Timber Road which now terminates at Lake Avenue (west of Wilmette) be connected in a northeasterly direction across the Chicago and Northwestern tracks into the Happ Road. By following the Happ Road and recrossing the Chicago & Northwestern tracks at Northfield, and continuing along this road until it connects into the Skokie Road (which is the road east and west between Winnetka and Wheeling), then going west for a half mile along the Skokie Road and turning north on the first road to the right, which road leads direct into Lake Forest. By using this route residents of Lake Forest

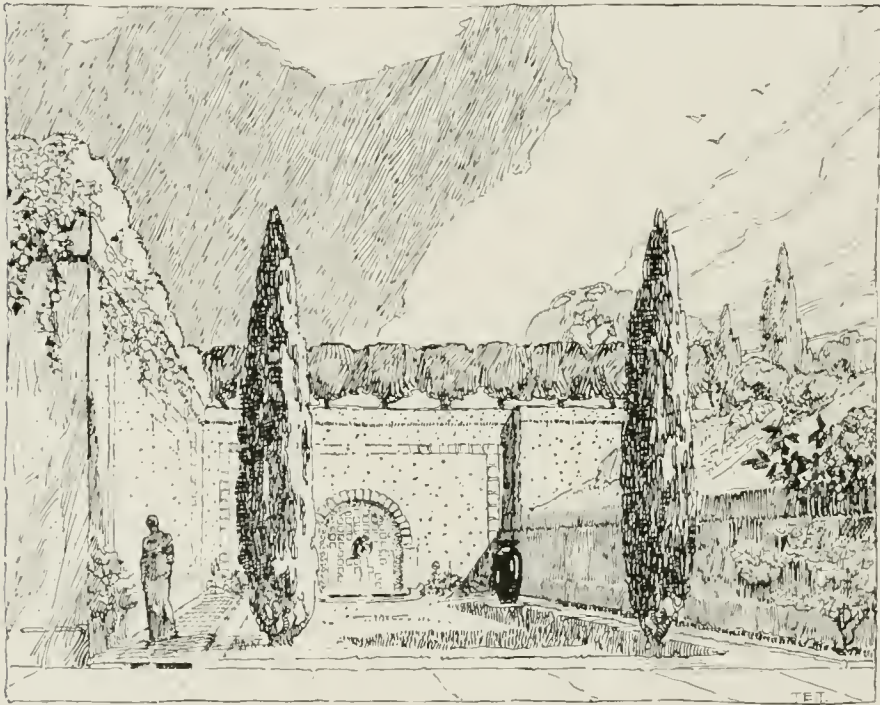
and intermediate points can connect into Canal Boulevard and thus avoid Evanston.

Thalmann Road: Mr. Willam G. Hibbard and others living in Winnetka have made arrangements to connect the Thalmann Road through to Harrison Street west of Evanston, and they are endeavoring to carry this road through to connect with Lincoln Avenue at Niles Center. It is obviously to the advantage of Evanston that this should be accomplished, rather than that the Winnetka motorists reach Chicago by going east on Harrison Street and passing through Evanston.

Milwaukee Avenue: Before the summer of 1917 Milwaukee Avenue will have a first class pavement. Its use will enable motors to go continuously from Chicago to the north limits of Wheeling. Motor trucks are even now running daily from a farm located just south of Wheeling at a point where Milwaukee Avenue road crosses the DesPlaines River, into the Randolph Market in two hours. This is a demonstration of the commercial advantage to the farmer in improving highways. Good roads mean the emancipation of the farmer from his all night ride on the old-fashioned horse drawn market wagon in order to reach Chicago for the early morning business. Milwaukee Avenue is destined to become one of the vast highway systems of the world. From Milwaukee Avenue at its intersection with Lawrence Avenue, the Higgins Road leads to Dundee, and this road is to be paved in 1917 to the county line, a distance of 15 miles. Combining Milwaukee Avenue and its connecting roads already paved or to be paved in 1917 in Cook County, outside the Chicago limits, will make about forty miles of as good roads as there are in the world. Evanston must tap into this system. When Dempster Street is paved to Milwaukee Avenue it will add eight miles more.

The advantages to Evanston of being connected into these good roads are numerous. One advantage would be to bring the people from the smaller towns to the west into Evanston to do their shopping, thus benefitting Evanston merchants.

These small towns will send their dairy and farm products to our markets, and we will procure cheaper and fresher products for our tables. The people of Evanston will motor back and forth between the adjoining towns and spend money in their shops. Good roads will not only be beneficial to Evanston but to every other town with which it is brought into communication by means of them.



A SUGGESTION FOR DEVELOPING WITH GRASS, VINES, SHRUBBERY AND A FOUNTAIN
THE SMALL TRIANGULAR SPACE WEST OF ROSENBERG'S STORE
BETWEEN THE ELEVATED AND NORTHWESTERN
TRACKS SOUTH OF DAVIS STREET

THE CITY CENTER

III

ONE of the gravest defects in the present arrangement of Evanston is the lack of a proper development of the central part of the city.

This portion is bounded by Davis Street on the south, the Chicago and Northwestern right of way on the west, Church Street on the north and Orrington Avenue on the east. In addition to important business blocks and banks it contains the City Hall, the Public Library, the Post Office, the Chicago and Northwestern Railway Station, the Northwestern Elevated Station, the Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee station, and the Sherman Avenue surface line. It contains also three parks; the little park between the Northwestern and the Elevated right of way, Commercial Park, and Fountain Square Park.

An inspection of the plans will show that the Public buildings in this area, beautiful as some of them are, are entirely unrelated to each other, and that the parks, also beautiful, are inadequate in size and are but imprisoned bits of greensward, incapable of being seen or enjoyed except as units. Thus Commercial Park, blocked to the south by buildings, is used almost exclusively as a short cut from street to street. Railroad Park, hemmed in by two railroads, does not appeal either as a breathing or resting place. The little park in Fountain Square affords no resting place, and is rendered inaccessible both by its iron fence and by the street car tracks that closely skirt its eastern edge. Naturally people prefer the sidewalks to the parks, and we find the former crowded and the latter deserted.

We have attempted to show in our plan for the City Center an extension and correlation of the parks, and the reservation of certain areas for new buildings of a public nature which the future needs of Evanston will demand. It is proposed to acquire and remove the buildings in the triangular

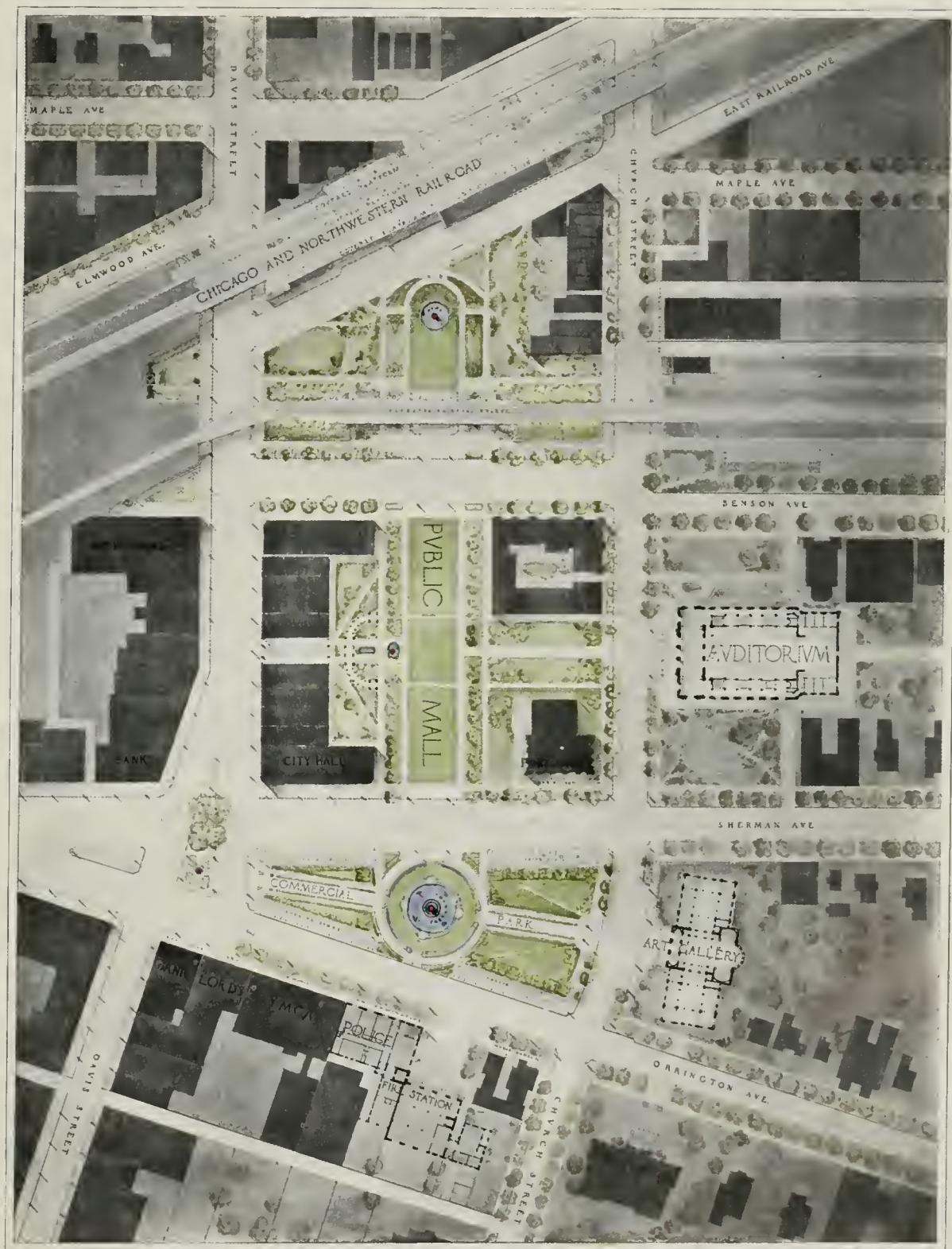


PRESENT STATE OF CITY CENTER

block between Commercial Park and Fountain Square. Only one of these buildings is substantial. Commercial Park thus enlarged, would be beautified with a large fountain and pool, and with shrubs, flowerbeds, and paths. Around its entire boundary would be a parking space for automobiles, large enough to hold all of the cars which now encumber Davis Street, thereby giving to Evanston the unique distinction of having solved the problem of parking automobiles in a business district.

In the block containing the City Hall and Post Office are located two alleys, both connecting Sherman with Benson Avenues. We propose acquiring the land between these alleys and removing all the buildings which are for the most part of little value. The space thus acquired would be transformed into a park or public Mall, the center free from trees, but beautified by flowers and statuary. On either side of this Mall would be walks lined with trees to connect Benson and Sherman Avenues. The rear of buildings now fronting on Davis Street would then face on the Mall. These buildings should be beautified architecturally to harmonize with their surroundings. The shops would thus have double frontages, and their desirability correspondingly enhanced from a renting standpoint. Lake Forest has recently built opposite the Railway station, a square surrounded by buildings built in a distinctive style of architecture. This is a somewhat similar enterprise to ours, and theirs has already proved a financial success, as well as a notable artistic and civic achievement. It has added greatly to the desirability of Lake Forest, both for business and residence, and added immensely to real estate values. See illustration page 39.

Railroad Park would be rescued from its present isolation, and standing as it does at the west end would become the head or terminus of the Mall by simply opening up the embankment under the elevated structure and replacing the present eastern wall with a monumental and ornamental steel bridge of three spans. With this arrangement Railroad



PROPOSED CITY CENTER

Park would become the western terminus of the City Center and be visible from Orrington Avenue. A fountain in the center of Railroad Park would be balanced by another fountain in Commercial Park, and the two parks and Mall would thus be tied together.

Fountain Square Park, with its beautiful elms and its fountain should be preserved, but we feel it could be made practical if the fountain were moved some feet to the east, in order to permit straightening the street car tracks, and eliminate the sweeping curve which has been a menace for so many years; the space around the fountain when relocated would be treated with grass and a circular walk, to serve as a much needed safety island for the heart of the city. This little park would also serve to direct traffic, and prevent the cross-cutting of vehicles, which is always dangerous and confusing. A second safety island and underground comfort station is suggested contiguous to the surface trolley tracks, on Sherman Avenue just south of Davis Street.

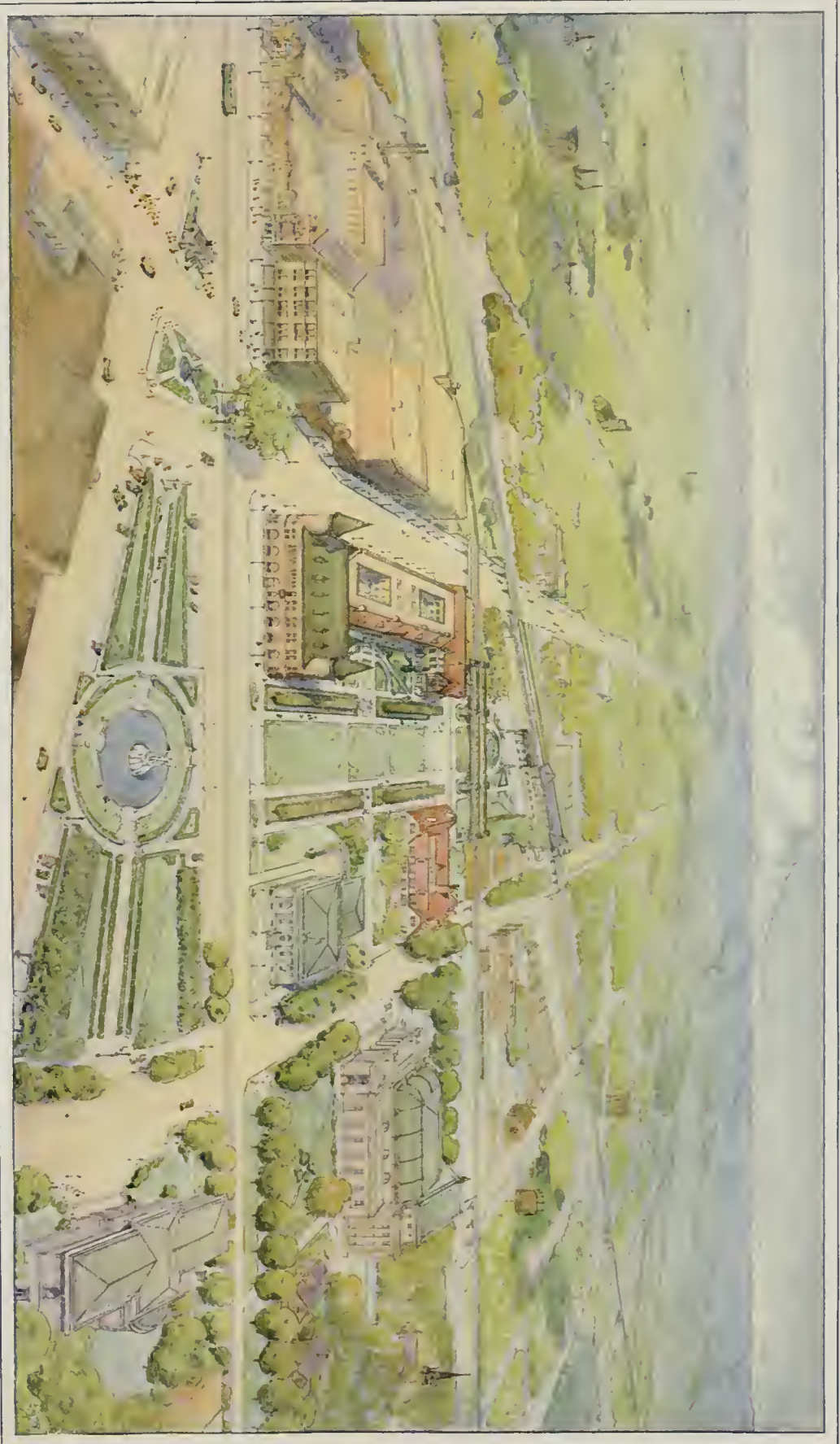
The parks contained in the City Center, besides their obvious functions of providing rest and recreation, would serve as invaluable landscape settings for the public buildings. Of these buildings, the first in importance is the present City Hall, facing the public Mall to the north, with Sherman Avenue to the east and Davis Street to the south. The second, the present Post Office, occupies a similar situation, flanking the Mall to the north and having Sherman Avenue to the east and Church Street on the north side. When the time comes that a new fire engine house, police station, and municipal building are required, they should be drawn into the civic group and located on the east side of Commercial Park on Orrington Avenue. This building group would be a fitting terminus for the eastern vista through the Mall.

Among the new buildings which will be required as Evanston grows in size and metropolitan dignity the most probable are an Auditorium and a Museum. Under the "Coliseum Act" of the Illinois legislature any town or city may issue

bonds for the erection of a public auditorium. The Auditorium might be located on the site of the Haven school. The Art Museum is placed on the west side of Church Street, on the north and south axis drawn through Commercial Park. The location of both these buildings makes them an important part of the City Center group.

This somewhat elaborate scheme for the beautification of the City Center would not have been presented to the people of Evanston and the city council if we had not considered it beautiful, practical, and above all, of vital necessity to the city. Evanston has a national reputation for culture, clean and healthful living conditions, a city government without reproach, unsurpassed schools, and a residence district excelled by none in the land. A visitor, ignorant of our virtues, on entering the city at either of the Davis Street stations would have little promise of what the city holds in store for him. Unquestionably, the city gate and city center are mean, inadequate, and utterly unworthy a city of the size and importance of Evanston, and they are injurious to our fair reputation. It does not take much imagination to picture the advantages that would accrue to Evanston if the scheme as suggested for the City Center could be realized. It would mean added population, increased business for the merchants and above all, it would give Evanstonians something they would be proud of and thus develop a greater civic pride. The greatest benefit it would give us would be, perhaps, that of making for higher ideals of citizenship.

As Evanston grows, sub City Centers would become necessary at Main and Central Streets. At these points might be located branches of the Post Office and Library, which, together with the Fire Engine stations and Police Departments, would form civic groups of interest and importance. These sub-groups have not been developed on the plans, but their necessity in the not distant future should be recognized and provided for.



PROPOSED CITY CENTER

BUSINESS CENTERS

In a growing city like Evanston shopping centers spring up around the transportation terminals.

Davis Street: At Davis Street are located the stations of the Chicago & Northwestern Railway and the Northwestern Elevated Station, and the reorganized Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad is also to use the latter station. Merchants are the greatest gainers by a well developed City Center, and they should make every effort to further the City Center plan, because such development will attract people from neighboring towns to do their shopping in Evanston, and each dollar spent for the City Plan will attract additional dollars to the merchants. At Davis Street are located our largest banks and biggest shops and we feel that this is really the heart of Evanston and that we are therefore justified in designating this as the City Center.

Main Street: Main Street, with the Chicago & Northwestern and the Elevated Railroad stations and the street railway is already a very important commercial center, and its development on both sides of the tracks is both startling and worthy of the highest praise. Here the merchants are already organized. They should guard against any attempt to spoil the parkway east of the Elevated tracks. This is a great commercial asset, and there are great possibilities at Main Street for artistic development.

Central Street: At Central Street two separate shopping centers have sprung up, one around the Chicago & Northwestern Station, and one around the Elevated Station. Both of these centers are growing rapidly and should be developed by some established plan. The merchants might well advocate the connection of Central Street and Dodge Avenue by way of Brown Avenue across the drainage canal. (See paragraph on Dodge Avenue under Streets and Highways.)



COMMERCIAL PARK



FOUNTAIN SQUARE

MINOR BUSINESS CENTERS

There is now a small business center already begun along the street railway at the west end of Central Street, and another on Railroad Avenue near Emerson Street, one at Howard Street, one at the west end of Greenleaf Street, one at Foster Street and another at Maple and also on Noyes Street and on West Church Street at the corner of Dodge Avenue. These are destined to contribute to the expansion of the city, but must be guided in their growth. In these newly developing sub-centers the city may well consider regulating the building lines for shops, height of buildings, and even the type of shops. We are here confronted with the need of districting and zoning laws, as suggested in a later chapter.



THIS IS FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE LAKE FOREST CITY CENTER
RECENTLY REALIZED

Howard Shaw, Architect

PARKS



LAKE FRONT PARK

IV

THE greatest physical asset of Evanston is the lake, and in any plan for a park system the lake must be a prime factor. The lake forms our longest boundary, eighty per cent of our population lives within a mile of it, and a mile is easy walking distance for almost everybody.

Park space along the lake shore is cooler, more beautiful, and in every way more inviting than park space anywhere else would be. It also can be acquired by the simple expedient of filling in the shallows along the shore.

Of late years the advantages of the lake shore have been neglected, for two reasons, first, because of the sewage pollution of the lake water and the beach. Now the sewage is to be diverted to the drainage canal, an undertaking which is under way, and it should be noted also that the excavation necessary for carrying on this work of sewage diversion will furnish a great amount of material for the projected fill. The question of fill brings up the second reason for the neglect of the lake shore development, which is mainly the lack of any well defined and established plan. The park land on the lake front was gained not by taxes but by operating a free city dump. This phase of park development is ended. A United States law has stopped the kind of dumping which made our lake front park land. Evanston has to face a progressive program and to plan adequately to keep abreast of the times. The law now provides that all fill must be done behind bulkheads. The city should now come forward with a well-established plan. We concur in Mr. Cone's landscape plan for developing the park situated between University Place and Greenwood Boulevard, and joining this by a park strip along the lake shore to the second park which extends from Hamilton Street to the present Yacht Club. This plan when completed will make one continuous lake shore park.

We urge that the riparian rights which do not already



RAYMOND PARK

belong either to the city or to the University be acquired by the city so that the beach for the entire length of Evanston will be public property. During the necessary interval for developing the lake front park sand beaches will form by means of the \$50,000.00 expenditure for piers. Everybody expects to see a liberal fringe of sand beach not only in front of this lake shore park, but along the entire frontage of the city. This will serve as a permanent protection for the park against lake storms and also will enable everybody to enjoy the seaside features of a natural sand beach.

As will be seen from the lake shore map, page 13 the plan contemplates an outer island from the south limits of the city to the south limit of the University (and if the University so desires, to the mouth of the drainage canal at Wilmette). On this island we advocate a boulevard for automobiles, which has been described under the heading of "Highways." On the island also should be broad lawns, casinos and bathing beaches. Between the island and the mainland we advocate a lagoon 600 feet wide for bathing and boating. Bathing from the island would be for those who like open water and bathing in the lagoon would be for those who prefer still water.

HARBOR

We have shown a harbor on our plans just south of the University, and this location was determined on after consultation with the city in view of their plans for the immediate development of lake front park, and also bearing in mind the plans of the Evanston Yacht Club. During the summer of 1916 a survey was made by the war department for a harbor of refuge in the location shown.

BATHING BEACHES

The past summer has demonstrated to the entire population of the city the urgent need of bathing beaches. Now that the lake has been, one may say, discovered, at the end



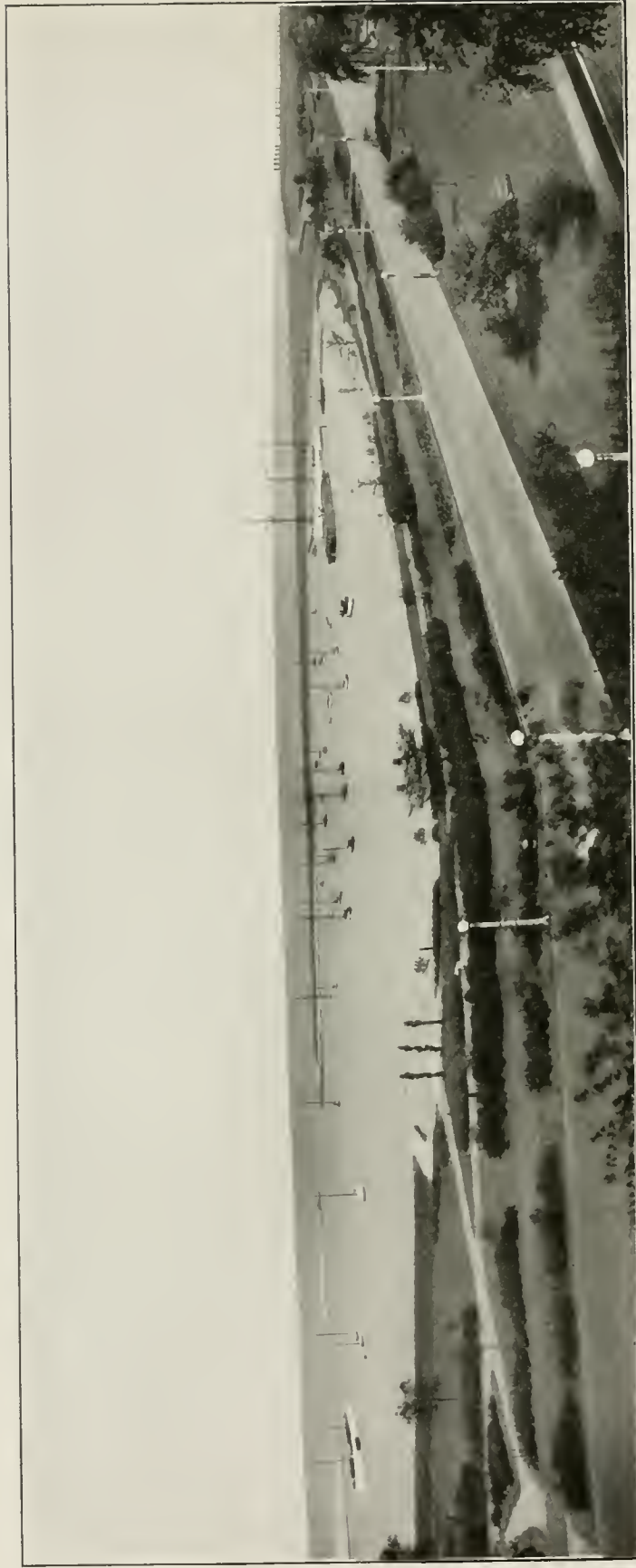
A BATHING BEACH AS IT MIGHT BE IN EVANSTON

of long years of neglect, people will go into it in hot weather, whether adequate facilities are provided or not. But going in haphazard, here or there, is a very dangerous business. It is absolutely imperative that facilities be provided.

We have shown in our plan three beaches: One near the south limits of the town, one as central as possible, near the south limit of the University, and one north of the foot of Lincoln Street. Mr. Cone has already drawn plans for this last location, which, if accepted by the city council, will go into service for the summer of 1917.

We urge that the city take early steps to start work on the south beach. The buildings for this beach may be built in units, as the patronage requires and as the city funds, raised by bond issue, or otherwise, permit. The site is already owned by the city. As a first step toward building this beach, we urge the construction of a pier at the line of our south limit, which shall extend several hundred feet into the lake, with a hook toward the north at the end, which will cause a rapid deposit of sand and enable a beach to be placed here at the earliest possible date. A hook pier such as we have in mind was built recently by the Commissioners of Lincoln Park at the foot of Addison Street, and the sand beach acquired as if by magic. We think the hook feature of this pier was in the main responsible for the rapid accretion of sand beach.

On the subject of park acreage, we have in Evanston only 1 acre of park per 1,000 of population, while the average for 20 representative cities, as determined in 1903, was nearly 5 acres per 1,000. On this point the Illinois Legislature has recognized in law that there should be at least 1 acre to every 500 population. In Evanston we have 1 acre of park to every 100 acres of city area, whereas modern authorities on parks and playgrounds claim that one acre in 20 is the right proportion.



HARBOR IN LINCOLN PARK, CHICAGO—A SUGGESTION FOR EVANSTON

RECREATION SYSTEM



DEMPSTER STREET NEAR THE LAKE

V

ADMIRABLE and necessary as they are, parks and beaches do not meet all of the requirements, as a recreation scheme for a city like Evanston. This scheme should be as comprehensive as the word recreation itself implies. It should provide everybody, from infancy to old age, with the means for play. Play is one of the prime necessities of life. Young or old, everyone plays, just as everyone eats, and if proper means of play are denied, others will be found. An enormous proportion of the crime of the world is play gone wrong. The means of play must be attractive. If it isn't pleasant, it isn't play. Therefore, a recreation scheme cannot be imposed in a relentless and militaristic manner, upon an unwilling public. Public likes must be consulted, public requirements accurately met. For the purpose of meeting them, the public may be divided into four groups, each with a different set of recreational needs.

- Group 1. Little children up to seven years old.
- Group 2. Children from eight to fourteen years.
- Group 3. Young people of from fifteen to twenty-one years.
- Group 4. Adults.

The needs of Group 1, the little children, present a very difficult problem and, for a reason which will be obvious, we deal with it separately, at the end of this chapter.

The needs of Group 2, children that is, of the primary grades at school, can adequately be met by the careful planning and treatment of school grounds. Practically all children of this age go to school, and a supervision of their play, which is still necessary at this age, can more easily be had in the school yard than elsewhere. The yards should be equipped with suitable apparatus, playground, ball-diamond, and so forth. We propose that more land should be acquired around

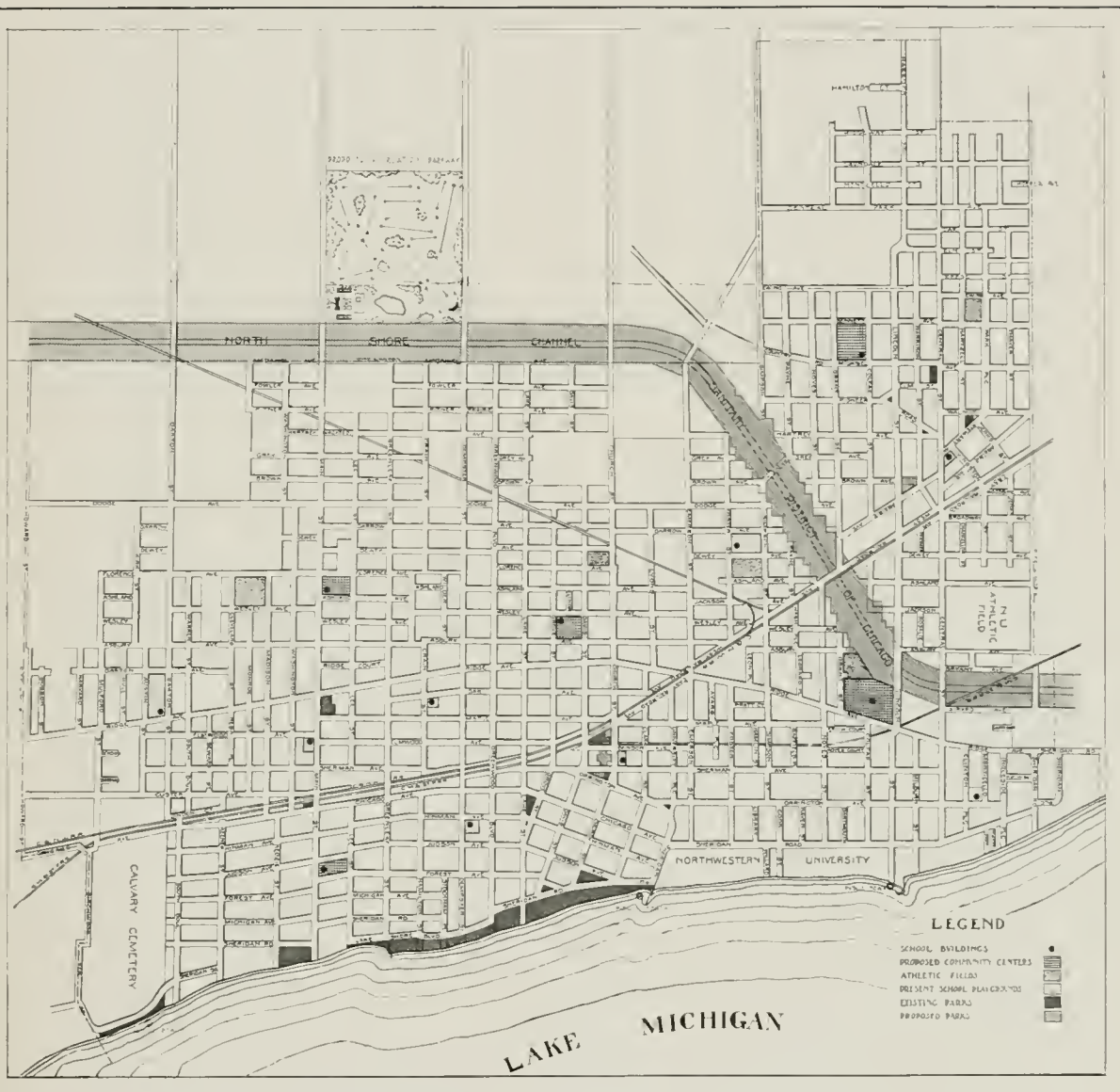
the school buildings marked as "community centers" in the map, for the proper handling of this group, and also, as will be seen, of group 4.

Group 3—young people that is, of from fourteen to twenty-one, have, of course, an entirely different set of needs. This is the age of team play at its highest development. Their games and sports are far beyond the powers of younger children, and require much larger areas for their accommodation. An athletic field for this group should be laid out to accommodate baseball in the summer, football in the fall, skating in the winter, track athletics in the spring, tennis for all seasons but winter, hockey and basket-ball.

Evanston is already well on the way toward providing for the needs of this group. Five fields, as above described, would meet, amply, the city's needs. Three of these are either already owned, or on the way to acquirement—Mason Park, Foster Field, and the grounds for the new high school. The other two, as will be noted, are proposed to be placed in the southern part of the town. The playground at Mason Park should be abandoned as such, and the apparatus moved to the playground at Dewey School, leaving the whole park free to serve as an athletic field. Foster Field should be treated in the same manner. Plans are under way for a proper treatment of the new high school grounds.

The treatment of all these athletic fields could probably be a combination of landscape gardening and athletic ground engineering. Indoor facilities for this group should be supplied by developing well located school property marked as "neighborhood centers" on the map. Two gymnasiums, swimming pool, shower and locker rooms should be in each community center building.

Group 4—adults. In a sense this is a very much larger problem than that presented by the needs of Groups 2 and 3, but in this particular case the proposals already made go a long way toward solving it. The development of the lake



MAP SHOWING SCHOOL BUILDINGS, COMMUNITY CENTERS, ATHLETIC FIELDS AND PLAYGROUNDS, PRESENT AND PROPOSED

shore, with its outer island and lagoon, would provide admirable boating and bathing facilities in summer, and excellent skating in winter. Part of the space in the parks should be devoted to the construction of good tennis courts.

A very important item in the provision of entertainment for adults is the development of neighborhood public buildings, where lectures, concerts and dances could be held. Already we have neighborhood public buildings which could, and should, be developed to serve this purpose; namely, the schools. It is a thousand pities that these large and very expensive plants should be used only five hours a day and five days a week. A proper development and extension of their facilities to serve the purposes already mentioned, as well as for gymnasiums and swimming pools, is the logical and inevitable next step.

There remains one more important play need for our youthful and adult population—a need not met by any of the foregoing recommendations: This is for a municipal golf course. The committee recommends the purchase of a tract suitable for this purpose, near the western limits of the city. This would be of vast benefit to the health and happiness of young and old. There are a large number of people who cannot afford to join a private golf club and who would derive great benefit from a municipal course. At present there are many of our young people using the municipal golf links of the surrounding towns, thus being exposed to temptations in going and coming which would not occur if Evanston had golf links of its own. Such a tract of land might also include a recreation field and a large swimming pool, and wading pool for the children, to give relief from the summer's heat to those who could not readily reach the lake.

Last, and most difficult to solve, is the problem of providing play space for little children. Little children, for very obvious reasons, cannot venture any distance from the home door-step. They get into trouble easily, are imposed upon and bullied by older children; they don't well know how to

play if left to themselves. Street car lines and railroad viaducts are all dangers to little children and act as so many barriers to playgrounds. It is obvious that the nearer these play spaces for little children can be to the home door-yard, the more nearly will the problem of that particular group be solved. Providing public play spaces, under proper supervision, at regular intervals throughout the city, so that no small child would have to go more than a few hundred yards from his home to find one, would be very costly, both as to initial expense and subsequent operation. Some children are fortunate enough to have adequate play facilities provided at home, and parents, or nurses, who will act as play leaders. But the vast majority of children are not so fortunate. Yet it is generally agreed that wholesome play is essential to childhood.

Play facilities for little children are precisely as much a problem in well-to-do Evanston as they are in the crowded slum district. From the child's point of view, it isn't at all a question of open yards, green grass, and fresh air. The areaway of a dirty tenement house on Halsted Street presents just as fascinating a play space, is just as populous with goblins and fairies, and all the wonderful people of a child's mind, as an Evanston lawn. The child must have something to play with, and someone to show him how to play. Children are not born with the knowledge of games, any more than they are born with the knowledge of mathematics. They acquire play knowledge slowly. And the beginning of this knowledge is the beginning of their knowledge of life. They can acquire a perverted attitude toward life by having play instinct perverted at the start, or can acquire a fine and wholesome attitude toward life by having play instinct turned in the right direction.

We suggest that our children have as much right to full consideration as the children of the slum district. With our opportunities for providing better and finer things for the youngsters of Evanston, we should lead in this respect, instead

of being about twenty years behind the poor districts of our big cities.

We suggest, as a possible solution of the problem of play for little children, the following:

An interior play space can be provided in the center of any city block. This could be accomplished by the vacation of the alley and the acquisition of a small piece of land on either side of it. This space could be treated in such a way as to make it very attractive from a gardening standpoint, as well as a very attractive playground.

It is realized that such a scheme could not be applied wholesale. It would have to depend for carrying out upon the initiative of each individual block. The needs of hardly any two blocks would be exactly alike, and in each case the problem would have to be worked out by the residents of the block in a way that met their local needs.

We believe this scheme to be, in the highest degree, feasible. Our alleys are neither beautiful nor necessary, and by a proper usage of the street, could be done away with, causing very little loss of municipal or domestic economy. The back yards of the town, taken in the main serve very little purpose except for the drying of the Monday wash. A co-operative scheme, heartily entered into by the residents of a block, could, at very small expense, and with very little sacrifice, provide a little interior park that could be both attractive from a gardening standpoint, and a very practical playground, which every child resident in the block could have access to without crossing a single street.

The above scheme for recreation and play, together with the map shown on page 53, was contributed to this report by Mr. James P. Petrie, and is concurred in by Mr. George C. Cone, the Park Superintendent.

DISTRICTING AND ZONING REGULATIONS



A VISTA OF SPACIOUS LAWNS

VI

THE establishment of districts from which factories, stores, or apartment buildings, or any or all of these, will be excluded by law is one of the most difficult problems that any rapidly growing city has to solve. We say, without exaggeration, that we believe it vital to the well-being of Evanston that such a system of zoning and building regulations, at once effective and equitable, be formulated and enforced. We believe that any citizen willing to give the matter serious thought will agree that this is so. No one, whether he be the owner of an ancestral mansion, or the possessor of a one-year lease on an apartment, wants to be forced to move by a sudden change in the character of the neighborhood in which he has established his home. Every property owner would like to be protected against the possibility of seeing his property deteriorated and its rent-earning possibilities reduced by the intrusion into its neighborhood of an inferior or inappropriate building. All would approve, in theory, of a system whose operation would result in the stabilizing and conserving of real-estate values.

Evanston is primarily a city of individual homes, and it cannot afford to lose its character. It is precisely because it is a city of individual homes that people are attracted to come and live in it. In order to command a vista of these homes and spacious lawns a man will pay a greatly increased rent for his apartment.

From decade to decade, of course, the character of Evanston must change, just as it has changed in the past. And if the immutable economic law of supply and demand could only be relied upon to work in individual cases no system of building restrictions would be necessary. Factories, stores, and apartments would grow up where they were needed. But it is a matter of experience that the individual builder does not invariably consult this law, and his mistakes

often result in the demoralization of whole neighborhoods. It has been the experience of scores of cities that districting regulations were necessary, and a number of them, notably New York, Boston, Baltimore, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Milwaukee, Seattle, Washington, St. Louis, and Los Angeles, have adopted them. The most drastic regulations have been established in the last named city, which, by ordinance, created distinct industrial and residential districts, and excluded certain kinds of business from the latter, even though they were already established in the proscribed district previous to the passing of the law. The California Supreme Court has upheld the validity of these ordinances.

These examples seem to give assurance that the districting of American cities is no longer an experiment, and it seems clear that Evanston should not lag behind in dealing with this vital question. The longer the attempt to deal with it is postponed the more difficult and the less effectual any solution will be.

The kernel of the difficulty is, of course, that while we might unanimously agree that the restriction upon the building of industrial, commercial, or apartment buildings from certain districts would be a good thing, so long as it did not abridge our individual liberty or impair the value of our property, it must be admitted that we would, to a man, look with aversion on any proposition in conflict with our individual interests. And if, in addition to seeing our own interests jeopardized, we had reason to believe that someone else was profiting at our expense, we would resist as long and as violently as possible.

It will require, then, skill, careful study, and the most complete and unquestionable disinterestedness to draw up a system of districting regulations which would be acceptable, as a whole, to the citizens of Evanston; which would protect our merchants as well as owners of residential property; which would stabilize values without causing dry-rot; which would allow to each individual the greatest measure of liberty con-

sistent with his not invading the liberties of anyone else. The difficulty of the problem is matched only by its importance.

The Committee recommends that the City Council appoint a commission of persons both able and disinterested, to study the experience of other cities. And on the basis of this study secure enabling legislation.



TREES ALONG FOREST AVENUE

VII

THE TREES OF EVANSTON

by J. Seymour Currey

THE land now occupied by the city of Evanston was originally covered by a forest consisting mainly of oak trees, though there were certain tracts of low land lying between the ridges and sandy spaces where no trees grew. When Evanston passed from the condition of an open country district and was organized as a village in 1854, almost the first step taken in improvement was a provision for lines of shade trees along the streets that as yet existed only on paper. It was well said by the superintendent of parks in Boston in a public address some years ago, that "the planting of street trees should be classed as one of the most important of civic duties," and he might have added "one of the first." In this respect the wisdom of our early citizens was well exemplified.

It was realized by the residents that the forest trees would gradually disappear to a large extent in the process of opening streets and clearing the ground for buildings, and that in any event the old trees were not desirable as shade trees and were not in positions to conform to the plans of regularity required. The Northwestern University had acquired a tract of 380 acres of land the previous year (1853), and had laid out the new village upon this tract on the plan with which we are all familiar. The predominant influence in public affairs at that time was centered in the board of trustees of the University, and the work of improvement was largely in their hands.

An extensive tract of woodland, consisting mostly of elms and maples, was situated about two miles west of the village, some vestiges of which still remain and are known by the old name of "The Big Woods." These "Big Woods" are now to be purchased by the Forest Preserve Commissioners

and will thus be kept for us and our children forever. Large numbers of saplings were taken up in these woods and transplanted along the borders of streets looking very weak and insignificant among the older forest trees promiscuously scattered about. This work went on for years under direction largely of Dr. Philo Judson, the energetic business agent of the University. Just as foreseen, nearly all the old trees have passed away and the elm and maple saplings have grown to



be splendid avenues of shade trees, which give to Evanston of the present day the well deserved distinction of being the best shaded city in the West. The double rows of "immemorial elms" standing along the borders of Judson and Forest avenues are specimens of what has been accomplished by this early planting, their towering branches arching over the streets suggesting the effects produced by the pointed arches in old Gothic cathedrals of Europe. There are many miles of streets in Evanston along the borders of which stand serried rows of

shade trees, some of them dating back more than sixty years. Evanston has indeed been fortunate in possessing a class of citizens who had a vision of the future in tree culture and who clearly saw that many years were required before trees could attain to their proper development. Tree planters do not see the full fruition of their work in their own lifetime as a rule. Now when these men have all passed away we of the present day rejoice in the complete results of their labors.

In view of the immense benefits conferred on the people of this generation through the far-sighted wisdom of the men of the past, we should regard our trees as a priceless heritage, and their conservation as of the utmost importance. If one thing above all others symbolizes the domestic charm of Evanston it is the trees which are its outstanding natural feature.

Very little credit is due to us of the present generation; we reap whereof we have not sown. Not only this, but we are squandering our patrimony. Whenever a noble tree falls away, it leaves an ugly gap in an otherwise fine row, and unless some public spirited citizen replaces this tree, seldom is anything done.

It should be possible for the City to acquire a modest farm of a few acres, reasonably near to Evanston, to use as a nursery. There we could grow at a small expense our own trees and shrubs. Whenever one of the old trees should go, we would be ready to replace it with a vigorous young tree which some day could take its place among those old trees of which we are so justly proud.

New sections are added to the City of Evanston from time to time, and we should lay out the trees in new subdivisions with the same foresight as the provisions are made for sewers and water. Trees planted now would yield handsome dividends in years to come.

We have a great many small and some large parks, both owned now and hereafter to be acquired, which are more or less undeveloped but are to be soon developed by carefully

prepared landscape plans under the direction of Mr. Cone. For these parks the City will need a great deal of shrubbery and many trees. The City could make a saving on the purchase of these if we owned our own nursery.

This Committee would like to see a tree expert appointed by the City Park Superintendent whose principal duty would be to look after trees and shrubs. He should have supervision of private as well as public horticulture in the same way that the public health commissioner now has supervision over general health. It is important to prevent the spreading of disease among trees just as it is among people. When a man's trees are sick he should be compelled to take proper precaution for their care. Nobody should be permitted to cut down a tree in his parkway, or in his own yard for that matter, without a permit from the City Tree Warden. Concord, Mass., has such a tree warden, and drastic legislation has been in force for centuries in the old countries of Europe.

How many times have you watched some ignorant contractor strip an entire lot of fine old trees simply to build an apartment house on say one-third or one-half of the lot. When the new building is completed, the owner of this lot, at a great expense, plants a few small trees, which may take forty years to reach the splendor and dignity of some of the old trees he might have saved.

What is more charming than the veranda or porch built around some stately tree, yet how seldom do you see it done?

You may say to yourself that the City has no right to supervise the trees on a man's property; he can do what he likes with his own. This we think is not right. If one man wantonly destroys the trees on his ground, he is doing an injury to his neighbor and to the entire community.

We feel that it is entirely within the province of the City to supervise a man's trees just as much as it is to look after the health of the same man's neighbors by making him comply with the City sanitary requirements.

MISCELLANEOUS



AN ALLEY ENTRANCE

Designed by Dr. A. W. Hebert

VIII

RAILROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY

THE Northwest Park district has shown us what can be done by co-operating with the Northwestern Railway to beautify the railroad right-of-way. This should be continued so that all railroad rights-of-way in Evanston would be softened by vines and flowers and changed from eyesores to things of beauty.

FOUNTAINS

Evanston is bountifully supplied with water, and our parks and public squares should be amply provided with flowing fountains, as the squares of Detroit and other cities. Fountains in themselves are a pleasure to the eye and a good influence in the City.

ALLEY ENTRANCES

Much good could be done by putting vine covered archways with pendant electric lights at our alley entrances to conceal the ugliness beyond and light up dangerous places at night. A good example of this is the alley entrance on the north side of Clark Street between Chicago and Hinman Avenues.

BRIDLE-PATHS

We urge that a bridle-path be built in Lake Front park on the east side of Sheridan Road, so that equestrians will not have to contend with the menace of intersecting streets. Provision should be made to carry the bridle-path west, possibly by passing through the University grounds and out Harrison Street, so that access could be had to the Forest Preserve lands which will extend along the north branch of the Chicago River and be developed as parks for the people of Cook County. Also a bridle-path should be built along the east side of and adjacent to the drainage canal.



LINCOLN PARK LAGOON—A SUGGESTION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF EVANSTON'S LAKE FRONT

SUGGESTIONS FOR REALIZING THE PLAN OF
EVANSTON

IX

IT must be borne in mind that it is not proposed to carry out all the suggestions made in this report at one time or even in the immediate future. The City Plan is intended as a guide for gradual development over an extended period of years.

We urge as far as possible that the development of the plan rest in the hands of the City Council. Let us consider what the Council is able to do toward developing the suggestions of the plan.

The Constitution of Illinois requires provision to be made for paying all municipal bonds within twenty years and limits the amount of indebtedness which any municipal body may incur to five per cent of the assessed value of taxable property therein. Extensive park development in Evanston if accomplished quickly must be accomplished by bond issues. It is perhaps not good policy to try to pay by a single tax levy for any large improvement that could be financed by bonds and the burden distributed over a period of twenty years. The benefits derived from park improvements will be shared in by the children and grandchildren of the present generation. It is right, therefore, that they should share in the payment of these benefits. Property purchased now will so greatly enhance in value during the next twenty years that the prices we pay at the present time will seem ridiculously small by comparison at the time these bonds mature. The limitations encountered under the State Constitution prevent Evanston from extensive bonding for park purposes, as the City for other purposes is already bonded practically up to its constitutional limit. Also the limitations of the Juul law tend to reduce the revenue that the City is able to raise for park purposes.

The voters of Evanston on the recent election date, November 7th, 1916, authorized the City Council to levy an

annual tax of three mills for park purposes. This will give a revenue of approximately \$30,000.00, but this will not go very far except to maintain and improve present parks and will not admit of the acquiring of much new park area at any one time. It may be possible that in a few years there will be an amendment to the State Constitution, which will give the City of Evanston more bonding and taxing powers for park purposes.

The present management of the parks in Evanston, except those controlled by Park Boards, is under the Park Committee of the City Council, and the parks are very ably maintained by them. The appointment of Mr. Geo. C. Cone, a trained landscape architect, as Park Superintendent, insures the City intelligent park development, and satisfactory results if his plans are adhered to.

A possible way to get a quicker start toward the accomplishment of the broader aspects of the City Plan would be to have the present existing two park boards merged into one, and the districts extended to include all of Evanston. It has even been suggested that the Wilmette Park District might also be merged with an all Evanston District and that the new district might include some additional territory to the west of Evanston.

Such a Park Board organized under the Legislative act of June 24th, 1895, could acquire land for parks or boulevards by purchase or condemnation, and the Board of Park Commissioners could accept from the City of Evanston the control of any park or boulevard therein. Bonds could be issued up to three per cent of the assessed valuation of property in the district, and, in addition to taxes for the payment thereof, a general tax of four mills on the dollar could be collected. Special assessments for local improvements could be levied. Districts bordering upon navigable bodies of water are empowered to reclaim submerged lands, and the title of the state is granted for that purpose to the park district to which such submerged land is adjacent. The park authorities

could construct islands or driveways beyond the present water line. They would be required to recompense the owners of the shore for any loss or diminution of their riparian rights; but the benefits to the shore lands would doubtless in many, if not most, instances more than offset the cost of the property and property rights that would be taken or damaged for the improvement.

By the Act of March 4, 1907, even more extensive powers are conferred upon the commissioners of every public park district appointed and selected pursuant to any act which has been or may be submitted to the legal voters of such park district and by them adopted. Full power is given to purchase or condemn any land for the establishment of new parks or the extension of old parks, and, by vote of the people, to issue bonds to any desired amount within the constitutional limit. This act materially increases the powers of the boards to which it applies.

The present assessed valuation of the City of Evanston is approximately \$13,000,000.00, and if a city wide park district were formed it could issue bonds to the limit of 3% of this amount, or approximately \$390,000.00. It could levy an annual tax for the bond sinking fund and interest and in addition thereto a four mill tax for maintenance and upkeep of the park district amounting to approximately \$52,000.00, subject to some slight paring due to the Juul law. This is in contrast to \$30,000.00 for park purposes now raised by the city acting alone. The city tax of course would not be levied if the park district were formed and all the present city parks turned over to this board.

We have had a preliminary estimate made by an engineer of the cost of the proposed lake front island, shown on our map, page (13). This island to start at the south limit line of Evanston extended, and to continue north as far as the proposed harbor at the foot of University Place. This estimate is based on construction similar to the development work of the Commissioners of Lincoln Park, Chicago. The

estimated cost includes breakwaters, revetments, fill, leveling, black dirt and seeding, and amounts to approximately \$1,690,000.00, and to this must be added the cost of a 40 foot roadway and inexpensive pontoon bridges in locations as shown on plan, amounting to an additional \$110,000.00. Thus you see the island scheme is something for the future—to be considered when the city grows larger or perhaps in co-operation with some such body as the Lincoln Park Commissioners.

Through the courtesy of a gentleman well informed on real estate values in Evanston, we have received figures on the values of property affected by our City Center plan that we consider reliable. The block bounded by Davis Street, Sherman Avenue, Church Street and Orrington Avenue is a very hard piece of property to put a value on for the reason that its value depends largely on the use made of it as it could be improved with so many different frontages; for instance, the Davis Street frontage running back one hundred feet on both Sherman Avenue and Orrington Avenue, to our mind, would be worth about one-quarter of the entire block. The property immediately adjoining this property on the north really should be considered as one frontage as it would only have an average depth of 90 to 100 feet, and if split into two frontages would only have about 45 feet in depth. The property now used as a park would be considered by some as Church Street frontage and by others Orrington Avenue and Sherman Avenue frontages and the values, of course, would change accordingly. In order to get at a reasonable ground value it has been figured in several ways and after doing so, we feel justified in saying that the ground value of this block would be approximately \$125,000.00.

We understand that the ground contained in the above mentioned triangle all belongs to the Northwestern University. The interests of the University and those of the city at this point are in a measure identical. It is just as important for this great educational institution to have a dignified

entrance to Evanston as it is to the residents of the city. We therefore hope that the University will find a way to enable them to dedicate not only "Commercial Park" but the balance of the property in the triangle as well for the benefit of the entire community. We understand several long term leases exist. These could either be acquired or allowed to run to maturity. If the University would go on record now that eventually the entire triangle would be emancipated, they would confer an everlasting benefit on the entire city.

The property located between Benson Avenue, Sherman Avenue and the alleys in the rear of the City Hall and Post Office Place is also very hard to put a proper value on, as the lots fronting Sherman Avenue and Benson Avenue are one hundred sixty-five feet deep, and while ordinarily the depth of a lot over 100 feet does not add much to its value, as business property, in this case, however, the rear end of both properties are very valuable property as they are surrounded by good paved alleys or streets on both sides and rear, which makes the rear of the lots good frontages for some purposes. In figuring the value of this property we have, therefore, had to take that into consideration and have arrived at an approximate value for the ground alone of about \$60,000.00. To the above should be added a like amount for the buildings, which would not exceed in value \$60,000.00, making a total of \$120,000.00. The immediate acquiring of this property we consider as the most important step to be taken toward the realization of our City Center plan. If this is once accomplished the rest of the plan will of necessity follow. If our public spirited citizens approve of this plan and would put their shoulders to the wheel and accomplish this one feature alone, such a suction would be created that the other parts of the City Center plan would quickly follow.

In order to get at an approximate value of the property known as the Haven School property, we understand that the School Board have refused \$80,000.00 for the property and we have been told that nothing less would be considered than

\$100,000.00. This property on our plan has been selected as the site for a municipal auditorium. There is a state law which provides that cities may issue a separate bond issue provide funds for municipal auditoriums. We believe Evanston could have this auditorium at once if such a move were felt to be expedient.

The property we reserve on our City Center plan for an Art Museum is on the north side of Church Street between Sherman and Orrington Avenues. An Art Museum may some day in the near future be given Evanston through the generosity of some group of public spirited citizens in the same way our Library was given, or it may come as the gift of some one man; but we feel that it must come and when it does here is the ideal spot for its location. We can only guess at the value of the property indicated for the Art Museum but do not think it would be in excess of \$100,000.00.

If a city wide park board were formed in the near future, its financial resources would enable it to commence at an early date on the following suggestions:

1. Develop our present and proposed small parks for recreation and play as outlined in this report, in co-operation with the School Boards.
2. Build and maintain adequate bathing beaches.
3. Start the development work of the City Center.
4. Extend and put Sheridan Road in shape as outlined in the chapter on Highways.
5. Start work on the proposed Canal Boulevard by co-operating with the Sanitary District Trustees.
6. Acquire a large tract of land west of Evanston for the Municipal Golf Links and the recreation field.
7. It might co-operate in the building of the harbor.
8. It would be useful in many ways to develop suggestions outlined in this report.

X

WHEN Evanston became a village in 1854 its population was probably between 500 and 600, but there are no reliable figures which can be precisely quoted. In a volume of statistics we find it stated that the population of 1860 was 831. At the breaking out of the Civil War in 1861 the population was considered to be about 1,000. In 1870 the census gave the village a population of 3,062, showing a rapid growth in that decade. After the Chicago fire of 1871 the population increased rapidly, but we have no figures available until the year 1890, when the census showed that the two villages of Evanston and South Evanston had a combined population of 15,967. These two villages were merged two years later in the city government of Evanston which was incorporated March 29, 1892. In 1900 the population was 19,259; and in 1910, the date of the last census, it was 24,978. Various annexations which have taken place from time to time would affect the ratio of increase in the above figures and any attempt to compute it is more or less guess work. The population at the present time is generally conceded to be in excess of 30,000. From the above there is an apparent increase from 1900 to 1910 of roughly 25%. From 1910 to 1917 the ratio shows again an increase of 25%. If we believe that the same relative increase will take place in the next decade from 1917 to 1927, the population in 1927 will have grown to 37,500, and increasing at the same rate in the year of 1937 Evanston will be a city of from 47,000 to 50,000. If this increase of population takes place it will carry with it a corresponding increase of taxable property.

The assessed value of property in Evanston now being in excess of \$12,000,000.00, by the year 1937 we prophesy it will be increased by two-thirds, or at that time will be in excess of \$20,000,000.00.



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